

BULLYING

AT

School



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Notice

The guidance in *Bullying at School* is not binding on local educational agencies or other entities. Except for the statutes, regulations, and court decisions that are referenced herein, the document is exemplary, and compliance with it is not mandatory. (See *Education Code* Section 33308.5.)



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A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction



SCHOOL is more than the academic instruction that occurs in the classroom. Our students' education also depends on an environment that supports learning. It is impossible for students to achieve at their fullest potential if they fear for their safety. The long-term effects of bullying, cruelty, bias, and hate-motivated behavior can have a tremendous impact on student success—both for the victims and for the perpetrators. Not until recent tragic school shooting incidents did we fully realize the devastating effect that hate and bullying behaviors can have on students.

Bullying at School has been prepared to address negative behaviors in our schools. The document outlines state and federal laws regarding behavior and discipline issues; it describes studies performed over the past decade that document the effects of bullying, cruelty, and hate on our students' ability to learn and succeed; and it shares proven strategies for addressing bullying and cruel behavior.

We now understand that all students can succeed if they believe that they are valued and supported at school and in their communities. I hope this document will help schools with the task of letting students know that they are important, that they can achieve, and that their schools are safe.

Thank you for your help with this important job.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack O'Connell".

JACK O'CONNELL
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction



Acknowledgments



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Introduction



IN 1997 the California Department of Education and the Alameda County Office of Education collaborated to address the issue of student-to-student violence predicated on bias and hate in a document entitled *Hate-Motivated Behavior in Schools: Response Strategies for School Boards, Administrators, Law Enforcement, and Communities*. The

Department also provided regional training and technical assistance to help school community participants recognize and respond to hate-motivated behavior and to further the Department's commitment to maintain campus safety and to support students and their success.

This 2003 document builds from that original document and incorporates the issues of school bullying, cruelty, and hate- or bias-motivated behavior. It is designed to assist school communities in recognizing, understanding, defining, and responding to those unwanted behaviors. The document outlines the influences that perpetuate cruel behavior and the consequences of tolerating bullying at school. Research-supported strategies help schools respond to destructive behavior; prevent bullying; and build a safe, secure, and welcoming campus environment.